

# POWERLINE

NEWSLETTER FOR CO-OP MEMBERS OF CORN BELT ENERGY



EDITION: FEBRUARY 2022

## Blown away by one-of-a-kind art glass creations

Laura Johnson, who has been a practitioner of glass blowing for 16 years, opened Starved Rock Hot Glass 12 years ago to share her craft with others. Starved Rock Hot Glass, located at 700 West Main Street in Ottawa, serves as both an art gallery and her studio.

She specializes in hand blown glass art pieces such as bowls, vases, paper weights, pendants for light fixtures, flowers, holiday decor and jewelry. Each piece created is a “one-of-a-kind art glass creation,” said Johnson. Many of these art pieces are on display for purchase in her gallery. However, if you are looking for a custom art glass piece, orders can be placed online or in person by appointment.

“I receive custom orders from all over the country for cremation art glass pieces and it is by far the biggest part of my business,” stated Johnson. These art glass pieces have the cremation ashes fused inside the glass for a memorial



keepsake. Johnson notes that the most common types of cremation art glass requested are paper weights which often have the ashes swirled inside with colored glass. “A solid chunk of glass such as a paper weight will show off the ashes the best, but flowers and jewelry are also very popular,” stated Johnson.

### The process of glass blowing

The centuries old art of glass blowing is captivating, and the process moves quickly. Many of the tools and techniques used by Johnson at Starved Rock Hot Glass are similar to those used in medieval times.

The clear glass is placed in a furnace that is heated to a temperature of

2100 degrees, making it malleable. This furnace remains on at this temperature for years at a time to keep the molten glass at the proper temperature and consistency.

The glass is then collected by inserting one end of the preheated pipe into the furnace and rolling it over the molten glass. The clear glass is pulled from the furnace and rolled on a flat metal table.

The metal table acts to control the shape and temperature of the glass. As the desired shape is formed, the glass is moved from the metal table to the glory hole, which is a natural gas-powered chamber heated to 1200-1400 degrees, to reheat the glass and keep it malleable.





To add color to the clear glass, the glass is rolled or dipped in crushed up chunks of colored glass, which fuses to the clear glass piece almost instantaneously due to the hot temperature. The colored, crushed glass is a very specific type of raw glass, and most of the raw glass used by Johnson comes from overseas.

Once the colored glass has been fused to the clear glass piece, it is again rolled on the metal table and then moved to the glory hole to continue to keep it hot and malleable. This process can be done once or multiple times depending on the desired color pattern and the type of art glass being created.



To give the glass its shape and pattern, Johnson manipulates the glass to the desired shape. Some of the techniques used include twisting and swirling the pipe to combine the colors, pressing the glass into optic molds to create

patterns and/or shapes, shaping the glass with tools such as the large tweezers, and adding air by blowing into a tube connected to the blowpipe. When blowing air into the piece, the blowpipe must be placed on a metal stand so the artist can rotate the pipe while blowing



into it at the same time. During this process, Johnson must continually reheat the glass in the glory hole to ensure that the glass does not cool down and lose malleability.

Once the desired shape is achieved, the glass is removed from the pipe. To do this, a steel tool that looks like large tweezers is used to make a crease in the glass to separate the bottom part of the blown glass while rotating the blowpipe. Then the glass can be removed from the pipe with one solid tap.

The glass is then further shaped, if

needed, with a blow torch to soften any rough edges. When this is completed, the glass is moved using heat resistant gloves to a kiln that keeps the glass warm and gradually allows it to cool over a period of time.

### Visit Starved Rock Hot Glass for a live demonstration

For those interested in learning more, Johnson offers live demonstrations to individuals and small groups. All demonstrations are free of charge but must be scheduled in advance. To schedule an appointment, call 815-313-5445 or find the business online at [starvedrockhotglass.com](http://starvedrockhotglass.com) and [facebook.com/starvedrockhotglass](https://facebook.com/starvedrockhotglass).



*Whether you are looking for a beautiful art piece to display at your home or a remembrance piece to memorialize your loved one, Starved Rock Hot Glass can create a custom piece of art glass for you.*

# 2022 Nominating Committee meeting scheduled

The Nominating Committee will meet at 10 am on Tuesday, February 8, 2022, via a hybrid in person meeting and video/conference call.

Any cooperative member who is interested in being nominated to the Board of Directors should contact a committee member prior to the meeting. The committee can nominate no more than two individuals for each expired Directorship.

As an alternative, any active cooperative member may also be nominated for election by petition. Any fifty active members of the Cooperative, by their petition, may propose the name of any qualified member as an additional nominee.

The nominated person must have

active service in the Board district of the vacancy, and no other Directors can live in the same township.

Petitions to nominate Directors must be filed at Corn Belt Energy's office no later than Monday, April 18, 2022. The election to fill the Director seats will occur at the Annual Meeting, scheduled for Friday, June 17, 2022, at Central Catholic High School in Bloomington.

The Board of Directors is comprised of 13 active members who represent the membership in the operation of the Cooperative. The detailed procedure for choosing a Director is stated in our cooperative bylaws, which can be found at [www.cornbeltenergy.com](http://www.cornbeltenergy.com).

## Now accepting Director nominations

The terms of the following Corn Belt Energy Directors will expire at the 2022 Annual Meeting on June 17:

- Pete Borowski, District 1
- Jesse Slager, District 2
- Terry Longman, District 3
- vacant, District 5
- Rob Angus, District 9

The Board of Directors has appointed the following persons to the Nominating Committee. If you are interested in running for one of the Board's vacant seats, contact one of these persons or an existing Director with your credentials by February 7:

- Brad Johnson, 1499 N 2550th Rd. Ottawa, IL 61350
- Bruce Thomas, 3011 Clearwater Ave. Bloomington, IL 61704
- Todd West, 2273 Knox Rd. 2250 E. Victoria, IL 61485

- Albert Hagenbuch, 3438 E. 11th Rd. Utica, IL 61373
- Darrin Schertz, 485 County Rd 2570 E. ElPaso, IL 61738
- Cheryl Sample, 10630 Greenswitch Rd. Maroa, IL 61756
- Ken Schertz, 14025 Lara Trace Bloomington, IL 61705
- Charles Read, 17243 1600 East St. Princeton, IL 61356
- Bart Bittner, 19754 E 1300 North Rd. Bloomington, IL 61705
- Stanley Otto, 6938 E 1700 North Rd. Danvers, IL 61732
- Wayne Cremeens, 26863 Wildfire Dr. Hopedale, IL 61747
- Mark Young, 27126 Golden Acres Drive LeRoy, IL 61752
- Rachel Torbert, 13325 Autumn Rd. Wapella, IL 61777



**Aaron Runyon**  
Operations Supervisor

*How long have you worked at Corn Belt Energy?*  
**5 years**

*What is your role at Corn Belt Energy?*  
**Overseeing daily crew activity and job scheduling.**

*What aspect of your role do you enjoy the most?*  
**Getting to interact with our crews on a daily basis as well as working with other departments of our Corn Belt team.**

*If there is one piece of advice that you could share with our members, what would it be?*  
**Be positive because always looking at the negative is hard work.**

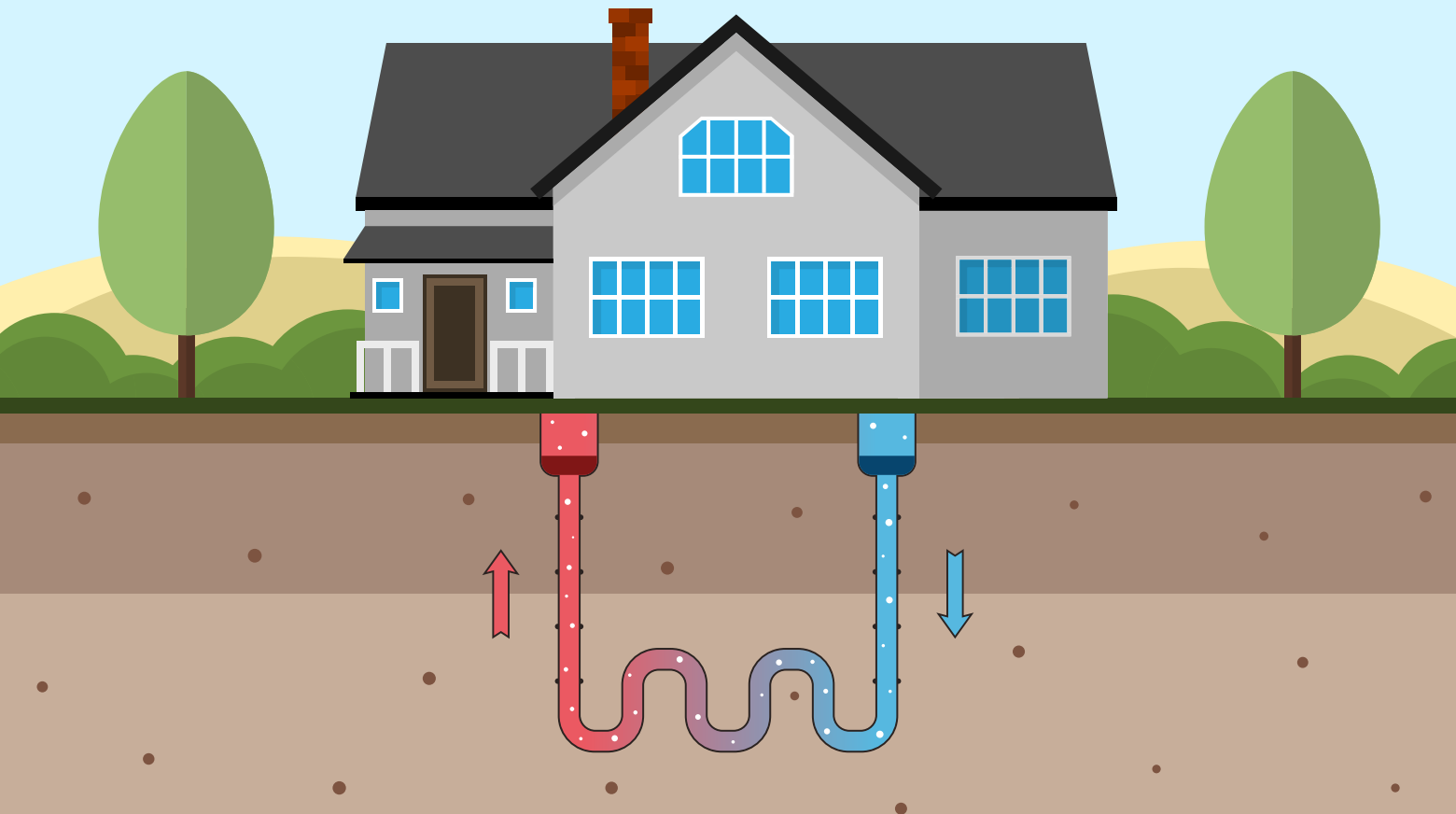
*Corn Belt Energy puts SAFETY FIRST. What safety tip would you share with our members?*  
**Always respect electricity. If you ever see a downed line or exposed wire please stay away and call us so we can come and check it out.**

*What are your hobbies and outside interests?*  
**I used to be an avid bowler and home brewer. Now I enjoy spending time with my family and doing home improvement projects.**

*Who or what inspires you?*  
**My wife because she is an awesome mom, awesome runner, and has helped me to see the full potential in myself. Without her I wouldn't be where I am today.**

*If you had to select a hashtag to describe yourself, what would it be?*  
**#DIY**

*Is there anything else that you would like to share with our members?*  
**Just remember when the power goes out whether it's terrible, or beautiful outside that a lineman is out there working to restore it. So keep them in mind and if you have a chance tell them thank you for working so hard. Because while they are working to restore your power their family is at home waiting for them to come back home safely.**



## Get (more) green to go green!

It now pays more than ever – literally – to consider installing a closed loop geothermal system to heat and cool your home.

The Power Moves® rebate for closed loop geothermal systems has increased to \$2,000 for 2022. The rebate is for closed loop geothermal heat pumps installed in new homes or in existing homes without an existing geothermal heat pump. Geothermal heat pumps are more efficient than traditional heating and cooling systems by tapping into the earth's naturally moderate temperatures to help cool and heat your home. While our part of Illinois endures frigid winters and blistering summer heat above ground, the underground temperature actually remains pretty stable year-round.



A closed loop geothermal heat pump takes advantage of that stability by exchanging heat within the ground and your home. That efficient exchange requires much less electricity to maintain comfortable temperatures indoors in extreme temperatures compared to other types of heating and cooling systems.

A \$1,000 Power Moves rebate is available for open loop geothermal systems. A \$750 rebate is also available for upgrading an existing geothermal heat pump with a newer, more efficient geothermal heat pump. You also can check with your tax professional about possible tax credits for installing a geothermal system.

If you have ever pondered installing a geothermal system, now may be the best time to explore the possibility! You should seek experienced contractors who can provide you with all of your available options. You also can contact us at 309-662-5330 for guidance on your first steps.

More information about Power Moves geothermal rebates available can be found at [cornbeltenergy.com/rebates](http://cornbeltenergy.com/rebates) or [PowerMoves.com/geothermal](http://PowerMoves.com/geothermal). Additional details about closed loop geothermal systems can be found at [energystar.gov](http://energystar.gov).

### CONTACT US

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